

S/N 10/768,723

Atty Dkt No. GP-303333 (GM-0420PUS)

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 15-20 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 8-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Claims 2-7 and 15-20 are allowed.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Examiner rejects claims 1 and 8-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Seksaria et al., United States Patent No. 6,755,461. According to the Examiner, Seksaria et al. disclose:

a front structure for a vehicle comprising a unitary panel (figure 5) formed to at least partially define a vehicle cowl (the portion of the 102 at 112 which extends from the back to the front of the panel and forms a trough) and a vehicle bulkhead, and wherein the unitary panel is further configured to at least partially define a front compartment of the vehicle.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's explanation of how a "panel" may broadly describe even a cast component such as Seksaria et al.'s bulkhead 102. Applicants have amended claims 1, 11 and 12, per the Examiner's suggestion to refer to a unitary "sheet" rather than a "panel". The specification provides support at paragraphs [0031] – [0039] for forming the unitary bulkhead and cowl of claim 1 from a sheet. For example, paragraph [0039] provides that:

Using QPF, large AA5083-type aluminum-magnesium alloy sheet stock may be formed into a complex three-dimensional shape with high elongation regions, like an SPF-formed part, at much higher production rates than those achieved by SPF practices.

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Accordingly, the amendments to claims 1, 11 and 12 present no new matter. The rejection of claim 1 and of claims 8-13 which depend therefrom is believed to be overcome.

Applicants appreciate the allowance of claims 2-7 and 15-20.

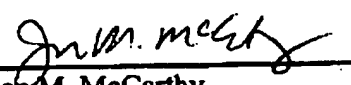
Conclusion

In light of the above remarks with respect to the rejection of claims 1 and 8-13 under Section 102(e) and the amendments to claims 1, 11 and 12, it is believed that claims 1 and 8-13 are in condition for allowance along with allowed claims 2-7 and 15-20, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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